

ARTICLE APPEARED
ON PAGE A9

NEW YORK TIMES
28 December 1985

WASHINGTON TALK

Briefing

Part II: Can We Talk?

The General Accounting Office, Congress's watchdog over executive agencies, has just produced one of the slimmest inquiry reports on record, taking less than three pages to say that the Central Intelligence Agency declined to discuss a charge that it had directed leaders of the Nicaraguan rebels to lobby Congress for funds.

G.A.O. officials, asked by Senator William Proxmire to investigate the charge, say it originally came from a former official of the Nicaraguan Democratic Force, Edgar Chamorro, in an article in *The New Republic*. Mr. Chamorro repeated the allegation for G.A.O. investigators, saying he did not lobby but had attended meetings at which rebels discussed lobbying Congress at the request of C.I.A. officials who were, he thought, operating under assumed names.

The study concluded by reporting that the intelligence agency discussed the charge in private with the Senate intelligence committee. The committee staff declined to tell G.A.O. investigators what was reported, the inquiry said, but offered to talk to Senator Proxmire privately.

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